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**The Manipulation Proclamation**

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Just as the price of digital cameras did a free-fall throughout 1996, so goes the cost of photo manipulation software.

The perfect tag-team partner for the digital camera - software programs that allow users the creative freedom to add and/or subtract various elements from their personal photos might be the ideal inticement for mainstream digital bliss.

'We think the home PC will eventually move into the livingroom,' began Sharon Finks, product manager for Kodak's Network Services. 'Consumers are enjoying spending their 'down' time behind the home computer. And with the price of all the other digital peripherals - especially color printers - dropping, photo manipulation software could become a huge market.'

Bit-by-bit (pun intended), **image** software programs, priced under \$300, are becoming available, allowing home users a simple and fun way to manipulate, personalize or enhance photographic **images**, and even **send** that perfect **image** to friends and family via the **Internet**.

Since such a high percentage of the approximately 200 million PC users in the U.S. own 35mm cameras, this is a market with tremendous potential. The photo software programs discussed here are sold through computer retail stores, direct mail catalogs, the **Internet**, photo retail stores and in some instances come bundled with digital cameras, printers, scanners and PCs.

According to a survey by Photo Marketing Association International, over half of the households that own a home computer and visit a camera store expressed an interest in manipulating photos on their PC.

What follows is a look at the programs available to consumers who are looking for an entry level or intermediate way to turn their home computer into a digital darkroom.

Adobe PhotoDeluxe 1.0 software (on CD-ROM) for Windows and Macintosh combines many of the rich, image-manipulation features of Adobe Photoshop, the leading photo design and production software, with simple, step-by-step guidance for modifying and customizing personal photographs.

Designed for use in the home or small office, this program's interface visually guides users through easy-to-follow steps for modifying their photos. This interface simplifies each process by leading users to the tools needed for specific projects and by providing instructions for each step. The program comes with dozens of built-in activities to ensure that users start enhancing their photos as soon as they begin using the product.

PhotoDeluxe provides two ways for users to start working with their photographs - Guided Activities and On Your Own.

The Guided Activities mode lets users achieve great results right away with automated, step-by-step assistance. Once in this mode, users can choose one of three activity areas: Touch Up Photo, Transform Photo and Cards & More. From there, it's easy to remove red eye, create personalized cards and calendars, perform photo cleanup, add special effect, and even create an 'old fashioned' photo.

Once users are ready to experiment on their own, the same easy-to-use tools are accessible in the On Your Own mode. Each activity area provides icon-based tools that aren't hidden in pull-down menus.

Both the Windows and Mac versions come bundled with Casio's QV-10 and

QV-30 digital cameras and Fujifilm's Print-It Personal Print Maker as a way to sell the product through photo retailers. When sold separately, estimated retail price for either platform is \$89.

According to Sonya Schaefer, PR specialist for Adobe, for the first time, the company will have a booth at the PMA show in New Orleans. She said the plan is to get in the face of photo retailers. Schaefer also noted that Wolf Camera and Ritz Camera store chains already carry PhotoDeluxe and the software is also available via distributors. For more information call 1-800-888-6293.

Picture Window 1.2 from Digital Light & Color is an easy-to-use, Windows-based photo-manipulation program which provides the serious amateur photographer, who's also into computers, more control over their **images**. This software combines with an overnight **digital** print solution to provide high-quality photographic prints (see article on page 67) but each can be used individually.

The program will accept **digitized images** from Kodak's PhotoCD, scanners and **digital** cameras. All of the standard **image** file formats are supported. The company will also take your slides and negatives and put them on Photo CD at a reasonable price and mail your images and CD back to you.

Once the images are in the computer, the fun begins. The program features step-by-step instructions, on-screen menu prompts and a user guide geared to photographers. Also available are editing devices to help users create that perfect image, as seen in the four flower **images** above.

Grace Stanton, representative for **Digital** Light & Color, said no retail plan is in place to date but they're working on several ideas. They hope in the future to get their product to the photo retailer for resale which may include bundling the software with other products. According to Stanton, the first step will be with local retailers in Colorado offering the company's **Print Order** Software (see article on page 67).

This software is available at a retail price of \$199. For more information call (800) 577-7090.

LivePix PC software from Live Picture, Inc. (LPI) employs the new industry-standard FlashPix photo format that promises unprecedented power and simplicity to people working with pictures on a PC.

The FlashPix format was developed and endorsed by LPI, Eastman Kodak Company, Microsoft Corp. and Hewlett-Packard Company. It enables the real-time manipulation of photo-quality images and is quickly emerging as the industry standard image file format for PC photography.

LivePix software is an easy-to-use, powerful software package that lets people produce a broad range of creative and useful photo-based home projects, including cards, calendars, posters, T-shirts and photo albums. LivePix software includes hundreds of photo images, a Live Template collection and a large number of special effects tools, such as red-eye removal and photo distortion.

LivePix lets users creatively manipulate and print their photos - whether the photos have been downloaded from the **Internet**, or imported using a scanner, digital camera or a Photo CD.

The LivePix software package also includes a special offer from Kodak Digital Processing. When consumers **send** a roll of film to Kodak Digital Processing for their prints, they receive a free Kodak Picture Disk, providing an easy way for consumers to digitize their **photos** and start distorting Uncle Harry's face among many other possible projects.

This software is compatible with other existing image file formats, such as JPEG and TIFF and is designed for Macs and PCs with Windows '95. It is being distributed through Broderbund Software is available for under \$100. For more information visit the company's **Internet** site at: [www.livepicture.com](http://www.livepicture.com) or call (408) 438-9610.

MGI PhotoSuite 8.0 from MGI Software allows users to order professional quality enlargements of their favorite holiday photo, place their photo album on the **Web** for others to view, e-mail an entire roll of vacation photos to friends or create holiday photo greeting cards complete with a caption, right from their home computer.

This true 32-bit application is a one-stop software solution allowing

users to view, edit, manipulate, order reprints, order photo gifts or organize and archive their photos electronically using a home computer and the **Internet**. Users can do more than 1,000 different things with photos using PhotoSuite including photo touch up, image capture, photo collages, word balloons, body switching, sports cards and more.

MGI Software users can connect to PictureVision's PhotoNet linking PC users with photo finishers (see article this page).

The software supports all the popular graphic file formats including Interlaced GIF, Transparent GIF, and JPEG formats most used on the Net, and other photographic formats such as Kodak Photo CD, Seattle Film Works and, in the not-to-distant future, FlashPix.

PhotoSuite captures photos using any **Internet** browser, scanner or digital camera with TWAIN support. The suggested retail price in the U.S. is \$79.95 and includes a stock library of photos.

Also available from MGI is their PhotoStarter Kit for Microsoft Windows. This kit turns the user's personal computer into a photo accessory to place, edit, capture, catalog, transform and have fun with **photos** using a **printer** or the **Internet**. With an online connection, users can e-mail their **photos**, post them on the **web**, or **order** special **prints** and **photo** gifts where such service is available. The kit offers everything one needs to easily put photos on a PC, including film, digital processing service, idea guide and photo software. This digital darkroom starter kit retails for about \$29.95.

For more information contact MGI Software at (905) 764-7000, or visit their website at: [www.mgisoft.com](http://www.mgisoft.com).

Microsoft Picture It! software lets consumers enhance, create and share photographic-print quality memories in a fun, easy and affordable way that requires only a home PC.

Microsoft and Eastman Kodak Co. have integrated an exclusive within Picture It! - a seamless connection to the Kodak Image Magic Picture Disk Plus floppy disks, that enables consumers to create photographic-quality projects such as 11x14" collages.

From a pull-down menu, consumers can **order** photographic **prints** as well as high-quality **photo** gifts, such as **photo** albums, video case covers, custom labels and more.

Picture It! includes a number of Smart Tasks to automatically correct such common problems as red-eye, over-exposure and odd color tints. Each step of the way, users see all the changes they wish to make instantly on screen, with no surprises. As they become more experienced, users can bypass Smart Tasks and work on their own.

A key enabler of this software is the new imaging standard called FlashPix, mentioned before. Pictures burst on screen and change instantly when edited, making enhancing and creating with pictures easy and fun for consumers. Picture It! is the first consumer application to take full advantage of the new file format and extend its capabilities to add compositing, the ability to combine multiple photographic-quality images and text virtually without limitation, and requiring nothing more than a typical home PC.

In addition, users can create and send electronic slide shows directly from within Picture It! or share them over the World Wide **Web**.

Users can also take their pictures from the software and combine them with Hallmark Connections designs and messages to create personalized cards, invitations and more in Microsoft Greetings Workshop, a new home desktop publishing application from Microsoft and Hallmark Connections.

The software is priced at approximately \$79.95. For online product information visit:

[www.microsoft.com/pictureit/](http://www.microsoft.com/pictureit/)

Seattle Film, Works' has developed a great entry-level idea with their PhotoWorks Plus 1.0 for Windows, a combination software and film processing service that lets consumers order photos on a 3-1/2 inches floppy disk at the same time film is sent for processing.

For \$3.95 plus processing, Seattle FilmWorks will scan a 24-exposure roll of film and **send** it back to the consumer as 640x480, 16-million-color-potential format files, together with prints, negatives

and a free roll of replacement film. PhotoWorks Plus software can then be used to view and print **images** on your own computer, show albums, or export to other software programs to personalize documents, presentations, newsletters, home-made greeting cards, school reports, computer art-work, etc.

The PhotoWorks Plus software lets users organize and catalog photos, preview, annotate and organize personal photos into computerized albums, and then share them with others by running simple 'slide shows' or by building them into your own personalized screen saver.

PhotoWorks Plus lets you print your **photos** using any HP-compatible color or black-and-white **printer**, and has a full import/export support to every major graphics file format, including PCX, TIF, GIF, JPEG, etc.

Requirements include Windows 3.1 or higher in 386-enhanced mode, VGA or SVGA (recommended) graphics, high-density 3-1.2 inches floppy drive, 4MB RAM and 8MB of available disk space.

The software is priced at \$44.95. For more information call Seattle FilmWorks at 1-800-445-3348.

Storm Software's EasyPhoto software included with the company's EasyPhoto Reader is designed to make it as easy to use personal photos on computers as it is to use text. The full-color photo reader automatically reads photos into a computer.

Both products run on a Windows PC with a CD-ROM drive. The software makes it easy to add, view, find, enhance and use personal photos on a home PC. Taking up less desk space than a standard mousepad, the Reader includes a feeder tray that ensures consistent, high-quality photo replication. Users just need to press the start button and the Photo Reader inputs the photo directly into an EasyPhoto Gallery.

Because it is specifically designed for the home market, EasyPhoto has all the features a personal computer user needs. It works seamlessly with a computer's existing applications.

EasyPhoto integrates an advanced virtual memory system that helps consumers use photos on a home PC that typically has low amounts of memory. EasyPhoto software uses ClearPrint technology to improve the quality of photos printed with today's color ink jet and grayscale laser printers.

Besides the EasyPhoto Reader, EasyPhoto can read photographs directly from a Kodak Photo CD, floppy or hard disk, scanners, or digital cameras.

EasyPhoto lets home users place any photo into word processors and other programs. If the application is OLE 2.0-compliant, such as Microsoft Word 6.0, Microsoft Works 3.0, WordPerfect 6.1, Visio and Family Tree Maker, you can just choose a thumbnail photo from the gallery and drag and drop it into your document.

The program also allows users to resize, rotate and crop photos, and adjust brightness and contrast, change colors and remove scratches.

The EasyPhoto Reader and software system is available at an estimated street price of \$269. The EasyPhoto software is available separately for around \$49.

For more information call Storm Software at (800) 275-5734.

Imaging software for Windows currently available from Ulead Systems is PhotoImpact 3.01 with WebExtensions and the company's new iPhotoExpress.

PhotoImpact 3.01 with WebExtensions is the company's new version of their award-winning PhotoImpact 3.0 software. Version 3.01 includes advanced tools and utilities for creating **web** site graphics and optimizing images for **web** site publishing. This program offers **web** site designers and Microsoft Office users a powerful one-stop, graphics solution by adding **web** functionality to an already sophisticated set of imaging tools.

Version 3.01 has powerful new features for creating outstanding and unique graphics for **web** sites. For 'Pick-and-Apply' editing, the PhotoImpact EasyPalette contains over 100 tileable patterns and textures which can be used in the Background Designer. Once created, backgrounds can easily be viewed with the Preview feature which actually simulates a **web** page browser. Other image editing tools are included in the Effect Gallery (38 special effects and many new effects), Style Gallery (alter image appearance), Texture Gallery (68 natural textures, including fabric, wood,

marble, etc.), Gradient Gallery (42 customizable gradients provided) and My Gallery - a visual library containing favorite images with all attributed included.

Features drag-and-drop placement of images in a document or presentation, individually or batch-print images, e-mail images through MAPI-compatible services, easy multimedia slide show production, full screen playback of images, graphics or video, user-selectable background music and more.

The PhotoImpact Album feature allows the user visual image organization. Users can save customizable information with image thumbnails, powerful search and sort tools quickly locate files, up to 65,535 **thumbnail images** can be saved to a single Album and **thumbnail** sizes are adjustable from 32x32 to 512x512 pixels.

The software is available at a suggested retail price of \$199. Current owners of PhotoImpact 3.0 may upgrade for only \$34.95.

For the entry-level user, iPhotoExpress is a new imaging and photo-based editing software package. This program lets users easily produce personalized greeting cards, calendars, invitations, business cards and other documents using their favorite photos.

iPhotoExpress incorporates a powerful object-based image editing system with state-of-the-art tools and effects. Finally, iPhotoExpress provides multiple presentation options allowing users to output **images** to disk, **printer**, screen, fax and e-mail.

The program interface is organized into intelligent panels which guide users through the process of image editing. When a user opens an image, the interface automatically displays the next logical editing task. Users can then pick and apply effects, styles and changes to their images. This takes the user through a start-to-finish process and eliminates the need for users to work from menus or difficult image processing functions. Through 'Pick-and-Apply' technology, effects are organized in a gallery, as in PhotoImpact, offering users visual samples of available filters and styles which can be easily applied.

And **printing photos** is easy and fun. The Print Preview feature lets users resize, reposition and add titles directly to images prior to output. Users can use their input devices as fax machines or a copier using iPhotoExpress Copier and Fax Functions, acquired images can be sent via fax or modem or duplicated with a **printer**.

The program is available for a retail price of \$49.95. For more information on these software programs, visit the Ulead Systems **web** site at [www.ulead.com](http://www.ulead.com) or call 1-800-858-5323.

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